

of the wealthier class among the refugees remained in Holland but the poorer people are returning in numbers to Belgium.

"During the period of the war Holland became one of the small isles of refuge where many people found shelter from the storms of war," says Sholom Asch, Jewish writer and poet, in a recent report, received by the American Jewish Relief Committee, in which he gives the results of his work abroad for the Joint Distribution Committee. "Together with the Belgians, who, at the beginning of the war, flooded Holland, where they lived under the protection and support of the Belgian government, also came those Galician Jews who had long been resident in Antwerp and had there developed their diamond trade," he continues.

In their new surroundings they did not forget those less fortunate brothers who had been left behind. In referring to this, the writer says:

"These refugees, the majority of whom were wall-to-do, soon found themselves at home in Amsterdam. They not only required no assistance themselves, but even contributed from time to time to the maintenance of the Antwerp Kehillah which they had left behind. In fact the Antwerp Rabbi frequently came to Holland to secure funds for the support of the Jewish institutions in Belgium."

THE FESTIVAL OF SUCCOTH.

Beginning Wednesday evening, October 8, and continuing for eight days, there will be celebrated one of the most distinctive of Jewish festival occasions. It follows close upon the

New Year and the Day of Atonement but presents a striking contrast to the deep solemnity of these holy days, for it is primarily a time of joy.

Succoth, the name by which this annual religious event is commonly known, translated literally, means Fast of Tabernacles, or Booths, referring to the wilderness sojourn of the Israelites after the departure from Egypt, when they had no permanent dwellings, but lived in booths. Historically, however, Succoth has its chief significance as a feast of thanksgiving for the completion of the harvest. In Palestinian times, it was customary for people from all parts of the country to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem every recurring Succoth, and, amid much rejoicing, to offer, in the Temple, sacrifices to God who vouchsafed abundant crops.

The early manner of observing Succoth illustrates the democratic tendency of the Jewish religion. Every family, rich or poor alike, was required to erect, and occupy for the period of the festival, a booth constructed out of the boughs of trees, and covered with newly harvested fruit. These booths reminded the people of the past when there were no inequalities among Israel; when all were simply redeemed slaves, enjoying their new-gotten freedom with childish glee; when, in place of pretentious buildings, there were only rude huts, affording adequate protection from the rigors of weather, but open to the sunlight and refreshing breezes so suggestive of human liberty. In the pilgrimage, too, the democratic appeal is

quite pronounced, for again men of all stations in life flocked to the Temple of Jerusalem, tacitly recognizing that, whatever their economic conditions, they stood on the same plane as children of the One God for whose fatherly help in promoting the growth of crops they had come to render thanks.

At the present day, a booth, after

the old pattern, is usually erected on the premises of the Temple or synagogue. Many pious families still put up such structures in the yards of their homes, and eat meals therein. Some temples hold children's harvest festivals, the children bringing offerings of fruits, grain, vegetables and flowers to the temple, to be distributed among the needy and the sick.

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